

**FREDERICK COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MINUTES**  
**FMH at Crestwood**  
**7211 Bank Court, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
**Frederick, MD**  
**November 14, 2016**

<b>COA MEMBERS</b>	<b>DOA STAFF</b>	<b>EXCUSED</b>	<b>UNEXCUSED</b>	<b>GUESTS</b>
Mary Beachley	Kitty Devilbiss	M.C. Keegan-Ayer		Shannon Baskerville
Elizabeth Chung	Monica Grant	Randy McClement, Mayor		Mary Kline
Ernell Graham	Sue Ramsburg	Carolyn True		Jane Phillips
Tom Lawler		Sandra Wastler		Annie Lewis
Dianne Lewis				Phyllis Jespersen
Ann McDermott				Amanda Crawford
Tish Raff				Cathy Hanson
Marie Reeves				Liz Selby
Leslie Schultz				Judy Kendro
Bobbie Speace				Rita Potter
Thea Uhlig-Ruff				Alorin Harris
				Paula Wilhelm
				Margaret Jackson
				Shirley Grier

- I. **Call to Order** – Dianne Lewis called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.
- II. **Welcome & Introductions** – Dianne welcomed all attendees. She gave a brief description of the Commission and its goals. Commission members around the table introduced themselves. Staff and guests around the room introduced themselves.

- III. **Action on the Agenda** – No new agenda items.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the October 10<sup>th</sup> meetings were approved with one revision. On page 7 the description should more specifically state “nurses, a retired gentleman with interest in home renovation and repair, an attorney, a councilman, and a person with experience in researching aging in place” instead of “nurses, a home repairman, and an attorney”. Leslie Schultz made a motion to approve the revised minutes and Bobbie Speace seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Mental Health Association (MHA), Linda Myers** – Linda Myers is at today’s meeting to present information regarding local MHA programs. Although many people believe otherwise, the MHA is not a part of the county government. It is a non-profit agency and is a full-service provider. The agency provides service programs through the whole lifespan by assisting women during their pregnancy through serving seniors with the Telephone Reassurance program. Their slogan is “Mental Health Matters” and recognizes the fact that mental health can affect all aspects of life.

The Telephone Reassurance program will celebrate its twentieth year anniversary next year. This program provides a regular daily call to seniors who live alone in their home to help them remain there safely. There is an emergency follow-up procedure in place for unanswered calls. They also make referrals as needed to seniors receiving this service and there is also a 24 hour hotline available to them. The MHA also provides a walk-in behavioral health clinic which is available 48 hours a week at no charge to the community. The walk-in clinic is located at 225 South Jefferson Street and is open Monday-Friday, 12pm-8pm and Saturday and Sunday, 12p-4p. Seniors can use this service as well as seniors with adult children who are struggling. Clients can find their way to MHA via physician offices, AERS, or by doing research on their own. The 24 hour hotline counselors take calls, provide information/support, provide crisis intervention, and make referrals to community services as needed. The agency uses a language line interpreter service to avoid any language barriers. The MHA provides one on one counseling services to Medicare and Medicaid clients. There is also a sliding scale available to the underinsured. There is now a psychiatrist on staff who can address psychiatric prescription needs for clients. The MHA holds a program called “Mental Health Matters Hour” two times a month. This program provides an overview of what the agency provides and relays some of the success stories by clients. The bi-monthly meeting information is provided on their website. Linda brought some handouts to today’s meeting. She reviewed some of the stats on their annual report. Funding is provided by donations

from the community, payment in lieu of services, and some of the funding is provided by other provider program such as CASA and Health Families.

**Mission Moment, Kitty Devilbiss** – Kitty is the Community Services Manager at the Dept. of Aging and is at today's meeting to talk about the Title IIID Federal grant programs. She provided a report at today's meeting with some of the statistical information. The focus for these programs is health promotion and disease prevention. The programs provide opportunities to improve health while preventing aging issues. The funding is provided by a mixture of federal grants, state grants, and participant contributions. There is minimal limit on what is offered, but emphasis is on physical fitness. New programs are added as interest is presented. The Department is now working with Parks & Recreation to increase the types and availability of classes. Each senior center must have at least one health education program each month. "Steppin On" is an evidence based program and there are currently fifteen participants in the Frederick Senior Center session with a wait list for next year. There are two trained instructors for this program at the Department of Aging. This is a fall prevention program and involves two hours of classroom instruction a week. There will be a six month follow-up after each session. The "Senior Center Without Walls" program provides services and information to senior communities outside of the senior centers. The program offers information and activity suggestions in a monthly newsletter. The Department also offers speaker services and fitness opportunities to these senior communities. There was a suggestion that staff bring monthly activity schedules for each center to this monthly meeting. There was a question about the centers serving the homeless senior population. Kitty stated that there are homeless seniors who participant at the centers. They come for the meals and the programs. The center is a safe place for seniors to spend the day. Participants are referred to community programs as appropriate.

- V. Update on DoA/Activities, Kitty Devilbiss** – Kitty is presenting information for Carolyn at today's meeting. She distributed and reviewed a handout of updates and highlights.

Medicare D open enrollment is in full swing. The Department has provided prescription assistance to 512 clients at this point. Staff are seeing seniors at sites in the community, doing home visits, providing phone interviews as an option, as well as seeing clients at the office.

There are eight trained volunteers who are assisting the staff with these appointments. Open enrollment ends on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

The Maryland Department of Motor Vehicles (MVA) just issued a resource guide to aging drivers. This resource will be distributed to seniors at the centers from November 20<sup>th</sup> through December 20<sup>th</sup>. The participants will need to complete a survey in order to receive the resource book which provides safe driving tips. The survey information will go back to the MVA.

There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Veterans Community Access Center which is located at the Frederick Senior Center. The ceremony will be held on November 16<sup>th</sup> from 3pm-4pm. The VA Community Access Center will provide a counseling services for veterans of all ages. Kitty brought some flyers to today's meeting if anyone is interested in the services provided by the Center. The Department is only providing the location/space for the program.

Circle of Friends/Memory Café will be this Friday. This is a popular program and provides a great opportunity for a caregiver and their family member to have lunch and do a craft in a supportive environment.

The Department has a grant opportunity through the Maryland Access Point. Kitty acknowledged that Elizabeth Chung was very helpful during the grant application process. The Community Healthcare workers recently trained with her program (Asian American Center of Frederick) will partner with the Department to provide hospital to home support to prevent hospital readmissions. FMH and the Health Department will also be partnering in the initiative.

The senior centers are gearing up for the next quarter session. All the centers will be operating on a quarterly schedule. They are planning some special events for the January through March calendars. There will be more information available soon. Word of mouth is the best way to get the information out to the public about programs/services available. Suggestions for ways to improve communication are always welcome.

- VI. Public Comment** – One senior from the audience thanked the Commission for their work and providing a monthly meeting. She stated that she believes there should be more housing options for seniors who are of moderate income. There seems to be options for low income and higher income, but not many for those of average means. There was some discussion on the lack of housing options. Monica Grant, Citizens Services Director, stated that she is thankful

for this public statement as she is going to a meeting to discuss just this issue. She will pass this information along. Housing was listed as an issue on the Seniors First report which will be released on November 28<sup>th</sup>. One suggestion was for seniors to attend public meetings and to speak during any public comment opportunity. Those making these decisions need to hear real voices.

Phyllis Jespersen is a local realtor and spoke about a local couple she was trying to assist with some home repair needs. Both senior residents have a history of health issues and have a very limited income. She found out recently that their HVAC system has stopped functioning. Leslie mentioned that SOAR was the recent recipient of some donated funds specifically for this type of repair. The application for assistance can be found at [www.soarfrederick.org](http://www.soarfrederick.org).

**VII. Old Business**

- VIII. Local Health Improvement Program (LHIP)/Senior Workshop Group Update, Leslie Schultz** - This is a three year plan which will guide local health initiatives. There was a one day meeting of a group of seventy people to suggest initiatives for local health needs/improvements. The three stated initiatives are 1-behavioral health/mental health/substance abuse, 2-seniors, and 3-adverse effects of childhood. The largest area of interest for those attending was the senior population initiative. The senior workgroup has met two times and have identified aging in place, transportation, and access to information/communication as areas for improvement. An action plan is being developed to make progress and work on solutions. Some members of this Commission are on this workgroup. The next meeting will be tomorrow at the Chamber of Commerce office. The group is looking for volunteers to assist with any of the initiatives.

Monica Grant spoke about the plan to partner with Parks & Recreation to expand the fitness opportunities for seniors in the community. The current *Recreator* catalog has a few options specific to the senior population, but that will be changing. She is asking for input from consumers who may be interested in this expansion. Parks & Recreation have already started providing some services at the Frederick and Emmitsburg Senior centers.

**United Seniors of Maryland, Tish Raff** – Tish stated that there were three speakers at the last meeting. AARP spoke about their goals for the next year and two of their achievements from this year. One was to be able to have family caregivers designated and give them more access to information at time of hospital discharge which will allow them to be more successful with their efforts. A second achievement

was creation of a trust savings plan which allows people in small businesses the right to start a retirement savings plan. The state will administer the plan. Employees can opt out instead of opting in to the plan. The goals this year are related to health, drug affordability, Maryland teacher/state employment pension sustainability, consumer rights with utilities, and elder abuse/exploitation. NARFE also spoke of their goals. They would like to make Maryland the top retirement choice in the Mid-Atlantic region. They are supporting a phased in state income tax exemption for seniors as well as a homeowner tax credit. They are also working on a long term care insurance incentive. The third speaker, American Joe Miedusiewski, spent twenty years as a legislator before becoming a lobbyist. He supports accessibility in building codes. He also supports long term care insurance tax relief. Tish reminded everyone the Senior Forum is coming up. The date is January 25<sup>th</sup> and will be held in Annapolis. The website is [www.unitedseniorsmd.com](http://www.unitedseniorsmd.com).

- IX. Nominating, Bobbie Speace** – Bobbie stated that there are currently three openings on the Commission. The committee has received a few letters and are anticipating a few more. The next step in the process is to go through the County offices for review. Bobbie thanked those interested parties who are attending today's meeting. The Committee will be setting up interviews soon.

**Business Task Force, Tom Lawler** – Tom stated that the PowerPoint and video the task force created was reviewed at their last meeting. He stated that the County Video Services Department will be helping with the production of the video. This work will continue at the December meeting.

**Health, Mary Beachley** – Mary stated that the Health Committee met on November 9<sup>th</sup>. They had some new members join the group. The group continues to work on a fall prevention campaign. They would like to make it a community goal for 2017 for older adults. They have established a topic for each month. Mary reviewed each topic per month which will be specifically related to safety and fall prevention. The group will plan to partner with the Department of Aging. They will use senior gatherings/events to promote the campaign. They have some solid ideas/plans in place already that will be helpful. They will also involve local newspapers to promote their initiative. Some of their ideas have been addressed in other community initiatives. The group has some work assignments in place. There is a lot being done via email between the monthly

meetings. They will be reaching out to other businesses that may be willing to help with resources.

**Aging in Place and Community, Thea Ruff** – Thea stated that this group has developed an action plan with an education component; “Living Well as You Age at Home”. They will be targeting communities with 15% of their population over the age of 65. Thea has been attending other local groups/meetings which have related ideas/topics. Their next steps will include locating a community for pilot project, establish an education piece, assign members, and look at timeframes.

**Approval of Subcommittee Reports**, Marie made a motion that the two subcommittee reports submitted be approved. Leslie seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**X. Announcements –**

Leslie reminded everyone that the CoA has a Facebook page. The upcoming monthly speakers are announced on this page. Next year there will be more outreach to other areas of the community as four of the meetings will be held in various areas of the county. The next meeting will be held on December 12<sup>th</sup>. Christina Forbes from Daybreak will be the guest speaker. Leslie also announced that SOAR will be delivering holiday meals to isolated seniors. The application and information is located on their website.

**XI. Adjournment -**

Dianne thanked everyone for attending today's meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Ramsburg  
Recording Secretary